

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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CINCPAC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE VIENTIANE 5189

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, PFOR, LA, US

SUBJ: PERSONAL BELONGINGS OF USAID EMPLOYEES IN PROVINCES

1. ON JULY 31 EMBASSY SENT MFA A NOTE POINTING OUT THAT IN MAY USAID OFFICIALS HAD HAD TO LEAVE PAKSE, SAVANNAKHET AND LUANG PRABANG WITHOUT TAKING MANY OF THEIR PERSONAL BELONGINGS AND VEHICLES WITH THEM. NOTE THEN ASKED PGNU TO DESIGNATE OFFICIAL WITH WHOM EMBASSY COULD ARRANGE PACKING AND SENDING OF THESE ARTICLES TO THEIR OWNERS.

2. EMBASSY RECEIVED REPLY TO THIS NOTE IN FOREIGN MINISTRY NOTE 353/AE.AP, AUGUST 11, 1975, AND OUR TRANSLATION OF FRENCH TEXT FOLLOWS.

BEGIN TEXT.

THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE PGNU OF LAOS PRESENTS ITS COMPLIMENTS TO THE EMBASSY OF THE USA AND, REFERRING TO NOTE NO. 546 OF JULY 31, 1975, HAS THE HONOR TO INFORM IT AS FOLLOWS:

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(1) THE OFFICIALS OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY

FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (USAID) DESERTED THE TOWNS OF THEIR RESIDENCE AT PAKSE, SAVANNAKHET AND LUANG PRABANG. THEY DID NOT SEE FIT TO AT LEAST FIRST INFORM THE MFA OF LAOS OR THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES, THIS IN CONTEMPT OF THEIR OBLIGATIONS AND OF THE DIPLOMATIC NORMS IN FORCE. IN ADDITION, THE MINISTRY ABSOLUTELY CANNOT BE ACCOUNTABLE FOR WHAT HAS BEFALLEN THE GOODS AND VEHICLES OF THESE OFFICIALS.

(2) NOTWITHSTANDING THIS GENERAL REMARK, THE EMBASSY OF THE USA IS REMINDED THAT IT SIGNED ON MAY 27, 1975, BETWEEN THE PGNU OF LAOS AND THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE EMBASSY OF THE USA, AN AGREEMENT HAVING TO DO WITH THE DISSOLUTION OF USAID. ARTICLES 2, 3, AND 6 OF THIS AGREEMENT IMPOSED ON THE ONE HAND THAT THE PERSONAL BELONGINGS OF USAID EMPLOYEES BE SENT HOME BEFORE JUNE 30 AND ON THE OTHER THE RETURN TO THE PGNU OF THE AFFAIRS AND THE BELONGINGS OF USAID. THE MINISTRY HAS OBSERVED THAT THE EMBASSY OF THE USA HAS APPLIED THESE ARTICLES OF THE MAY 27, 1975 AGREEMENT ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS AND IS THEREFORE SURPRISED BY ITS DEMARCHE WHICH THE MINISTRY CONSIDERS AS BEING WITHOUT FOUNDATION.

COMPLIMENATRY CLOSE. END TEXT.

3. COMMENT: WE READ THIS REPLY AS INDICATING CLEARLY THAT THE PGNU WILL NOT (AND PROBABLY CANNOT) DO ANYTHING TO ASSIST IN THIS MATTER, THAT FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE WILL BE A VAIN EXERCISE AND THAT THE PERSONAL BELONGINGS ARE, FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES, UNRECOVERABLE. WE RECOMMEND THAT DEPARTMENT SO INFORM THE EMPLOYEES AND THAT THE PGNU NOTE 353/AE.AP CAN BE CITED FOR CLAIMS PURPOSES AS EVIDENCE OF LAO REFUSAL EVEN TO DISCUSS RECOVERY.

CHAPMAN

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